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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE BOARD OF APPEALS

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APPLICANT(S): Gary W. Grube et al.

EXAMINER: J. Choules

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ATTORNEY

ENTITLED: A Method For Collecting And Providing Network and User
Information

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January 12, 1996

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APPEAL BRIEF ON BEHALF OF APPELLANT

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Motorola, Inc.
Name of applicant, assignee, or registered rep.

J. Once-Palacy 1/12/96
Signature Date

ATTENTION: Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences

Sir:

Appellant submits this Appeal Brief pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 134 and 37 C.F.R. § 1.192 in furtherance of the Notice of Appeal filed in this case on September 14, 1995 and pursuant to an enclosed Petition for a two month extension of time. The fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.17(b) and (f) and any other necessary fees are authorized as indicated in the accompanying Appeal Brief Transmittal Letter and Petition for Extension of Time.

REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

Motorola, Inc. is the assignee of the present invention.

RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

None known.

STATUS OF CLAIMS

On the date of the filing of the Notice of Appeal, the above-identified Application included 14 claims, all of which stand rejected. The Applicants appeal from the decision of the Examiner finally rejecting claims 1-4, 6, 7, 11-14, 17, 18, 21, and 24.

STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

An amendment filed on 8/7/95, subsequent to the final rejection, was acted upon by the Examiner and was considered by the Examiner to not overcome the rejections to claims 1-4, 6, 7, 11-14, 17, 18, 21, and 24. An Advisory Action dated 8/24/95 stated that the amendment filed 8/7/95 would be entered upon the filing of an appeal. Thus, the Applicants presume that the amendment filed 8/7/95 has been entered. Accordingly, the Applicants will present their case based upon the language of the claims pursuant to the amendment of 8/7/95.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Existing computer networks are known to include a plurality of computers and a server. The server typically stores shared software applications and databases which any of the computers may access via the network. Presently, computer networks obtain software upgrades on an individual basis either through manual loading of upgraded software at each server or via the downloading of the upgraded software from some host to each server on a server-by-server basis over the telephone lines. Both of these upgrade methodologies are time-consuming and potentially expensive.

In addition to the difficulties in updating computer networks, software manufacturers have a difficult time obtaining marketing information, such as which software applications are being used, how often each application is being used, and on which type of computer each application is being used. Currently, software manufacturers collect marketing information in a static fashion through personal polling, return warranty cards, or sales statistics. With these static data collection methods, manufacturers collect only a small portion of the data available and the data collected may be several weeks or months old by the time it is compiled. The present invention substantially overcomes the present deficiencies associated with the individualized upgrading of software applications and the static collection of marketing information.

Some insight into the operation of the instant invention can be gained through examination of FIGs. 1-2 of the Application. As depicted in FIG. 1, the Applicants' invention is preferably intended to operate in a computer area (100) that includes a plurality of computer networks, a plurality of computers (104-107, 110-114, 116, 118), and a host computer (101). The host computer (101) includes a communication device (102) and a database (103). Each computer network shown includes four computers (104-107, 110-113) coupled via a wireline to a respective server (108, 114), which in turn is coupled via a wireline to a respective wireless communication device (109, 115), such as a radio frequency (RF) radio that transceives information over wireless communication resources, or channels. The depicted computer area 100 also includes separate, networkless computers (116, 118) that are each coupled to respective wireless communication devices (117, 119). The wireless communication devices (102, 109, 115, 117, 119) communicate with each other over RF channels (121-125)

via a wireless communication network (120), such as a radio communication system. [See Specification, page 4, lines 1-30].

The information transmitted over the communication channels is either network information (126) or user information (127-130). Network information (126) is transmitted from the networkless computers (116, 118) and the network servers (108, 114) to the host computer (101) via the respective wireless communication devices (102, 109, 115, 117, 119). In an analogous manner, user information (127-130) is transmitted from the host computer 101 to the networkless computers (116, 118) and the network servers (108, 114) via the respective wireless communication devices (102, 109, 115, 117, 119). Network information (126) includes statistical information, such as how many times a particular software application is used, and configuration information, such as information regarding the type of hardware, or platform, and the type or version of software applications being utilized within a computer or computer network. On the other hand, user information (127-130) includes customer information, such as bug reports, bug fixes, updates of software applications, free software, pricing information, and enhancements of existing software applications. [See Specification, page 5, lines 5-35].

Now directing attention to FIG. 2 of the Application, the Applicants' invention can be more readily described with regard to the logic diagram depicted therein. As a first step to the disclosed method, users (e.g., servers of computer networks or networkless computers) transmit (200) network information from time-to-time (i.e., on a periodic basis) to a host computer via a wireless communication channel. Upon receiving the network information, the host computer stores (201) the network information and determines (202) if any users require specific user information. The host computer may determine that a user needs specific user information if the user has an old version of a software application or is having difficulties with a particular software application. The host computer may also receive a request for specific user information from a user. [See Specification, page 6, lines 1-24 and page 8, lines 8-11].

If no users require specific user information, the process repeats at step 200. However, if a user requires specific user information, the host computer transmits (205) the specific user information to the user via a wireless communication channel. Upon receiving the specific user information, at least a portion of the user information is displayed by the user or, if the user is a server,

the specific user information is distributed to, and displayed by, a computer of the computer network. [See Specification, page 6, lines 25-34].

In addition to providing specific user information, the host computer may transmit user information to all of the users (servers and stand alone computers). This global transmission of user information may be done simultaneously over a wireless (RF) communication channel such that a multitude of computers may be reached at one time. This type of simultaneous transmission of user information is not obtainable with public telephone switching networks unless a telephone line is allocated to each user. Thus, to achieve the coverage that can be obtained with an RF communication channel as disclosed by the instant Application, a multitude of telephone lines would be required. [See Specification, page 7, lines 4-14].

The host computer may do considerably more with the network information than provide specific user information. For example, the network information may be used to verify (203) that software applications stored by each user are authorized copies of the software applications. If a copy is not authorized, the host computer may transmit, via its associated wireless communication device, a message to the appropriate user indicating that the software is not authorized and requesting that it be destroyed, or may transmit a message to the appropriate user that disables the unauthorized software application. In addition to monitoring for unauthorized copies of software applications, the host computer may use the network information to generate (204) user marketing reports. Because RF channels can reach millions of computers at one time, marketing information that is only hours old may be used by manufacturers to obtain a much improved reading of the marketplace as compared to the prior art static methods of collecting such information. [See Specification, page 7, lines 16-35].

ISSUES

1. The first issue presented for review is whether claims 21 and 24 were properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Williams (U.S. Pat. No. 5,057,935).
2. The second issue presented for review is whether claims 1-3, 6, 11-13, 17, 21, and 24 were properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over

Doelz (U.S. Pat. No. 4,156,789) in view of Irby, III et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,021,949) and Jain (U.S. Pat. No. 5,193,151).

3. The third issue presented for review is whether claim 11 was properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Williams in view of Jain.

4. The fourth issue presented for review is whether claims 4 and 14 were properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Doelz in view of Irby, III et al. and Jain, and further in view of Ellison et al. ("Reap the Rewards of LAN Inventory Programs").

5. The fifth issue presented for review is whether claims 7 and 18 were properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Doelz in view of Irby, III et al. and Jain, and further in view of Ogaki et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,654,799).

GROUPING OF CLAIMS

1. With regard to the first issue presented for review, the Applicants submit that claims 21 and 24 should stand or fall together.

2. With regard to the second issue presented for review, the Applicants submit that claims 1-3, 6, 11-13, 17, 21 and 24 should stand or fall together.

3. With regard to the fourth issue presented for review, the Applicants submit that claims 4 and 14 should stand or fall together.

4. With regard to the fifth issue presented for review, the Applicants submit that claims 7 and 18 should stand or fall together.

ARGUMENT

1.

Claims 21 and 24 were not properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Williams.

Claims 21 and 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Williams. Claim 21 is an independent claim directed toward a method for a host computer to receive network information from a plurality of users via at least a first wireless communication channel and to disseminate user information to the plurality of users via a second wireless communication channel. As recited in claim 21, the host computer receives network information from the users via at least a first wireless communication channel, stores the network information, and transmits specific user information to the users via a second wireless communication channel when the users need to receive such user information as determined by the stored network information. [See Applicants' claim 21, steps (a), (d)] (emphasis added).

By contrast, the Williams reference states that the mainframe computers (host computers) are coupled to the local area network (LAN) of computers via communications links. [See Williams, column 3, lines 15-19]. As is well known in the art, absent any other teaching, the communications link used to couple a mainframe computer to an LAN is a wireline link. Moreover, the Williams reference does not teach or suggest that any link other than a wireline link is used to couple a mainframe computer to an LAN. The Examiner concedes this point in his final Office Action, wherein the Examiner states that "Williams does not detail 'wireless communication channels'." [See Final Office Action, ¶ 33].

Therefore, the Applicants submit that use of wireless communication channels to convey network and user information between the plurality of users and the host computer, as is recited in claim 21, is neither taught nor otherwise suggested by the Williams reference. Accordingly, the Applicants submit that claim 21 is not anticipated by the Williams reference and respectfully request that claim 21 may be passed to allowance.

Claim 24 depends from claim 21, which claim has been shown allowable above. Therefore, since claim 24 introduces additional subject matter that, particularly when considered in the context of the recitations of claim 21,

constitutes patentable subject matter, the Applicants respectfully request that claim 24 may be passed to allowance.

2.

Claims 1-3, 6, 11-13, 17, 21, and 24 were not properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Doelz in view of Irby, III et al. and Jain.

Claims 1-3, 6, 11-13, 17, 21, and 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Doelz in view of Irby, III et al. and Jain. Claim 1 is an independent claim directed toward a method for collecting network information from and providing user information to a plurality of computer networks, wherein each computer network includes a server and a plurality of computers. As recited in claim 1, the Applicants' method begins when each computer network server transmits network information to the host computer on a periodic basis via at least a first wireless communication channel. [See Applicants' claim 1, step (a)] (emphasis added). Upon receiving the network information, the host computer stores the network information and determines, based on the stored network information, whether the computer networks need to receive specific user information. Upon determining that at least two computer networks need to receive specific user information, the host computer transmits the specific user information to the servers of the computer networks via a second wireless communication channel. [See Applicant's claim 1, step (d)] (emphasis added). Upon receiving the specific user information, the servers distribute the specific user information to at least one computer and the computers receiving the specific user information display the user information to a user thereof.

Similar to claim 1, claim 11 is an independent claim directed toward a method for collecting network information from and providing user information to a plurality of computers. As recited in claim 11, the Applicants' method begins when each computer transmits network information to the host computer on a periodic basis via at least a first wireless communication channel. [See Applicants' claim 11, step (a)] (emphasis added). Upon receiving the network information, the host computer stores the network information and determines, based on the stored network information, whether the computers need to receive specific user information. Upon determining that the computers need to receive specific user information, the host computer transmits the specific user

information to the computers via a second wireless communication channel. [See Applicants' claim 11, step (d)] (emphasis added). Claim 21 is an independent claim directed toward a method for a host computer to receive network information from a plurality of users via at least a first wireless communication channel and to disseminate user information to the plurality of users via a second wireless communication channel. The recitations of claim 21 are detailed in Argument Section One above.

The Doelz reference, the first of the three references relied upon by the Examiner, describes a small packet communication network that includes a plurality of host data processing systems (12, 14, 16, 18), some of which are coupled through host adapters (22, 32, 34) to communication networks (24, 38) that include a plurality of terminal devices (26-30, 46-48). One host data processor (12) is also coupled to a network controller (50) via a host adapter (32). The plurality of host data processors (12, 14, 16, 18) are interconnected by conventional data communication links (20). [See Doelz, column 7, line 59 to column 8, line 11, and FIG. 1].

During operation of the disclosed communication network, the network controller (50), via a net master node (134) contained therein, periodically (every 22 seconds) provides a network all call message to micronodes in the host adapters (22, 32, 34) requesting that the host adapters (22) provide statistical information to the network controller (50). Upon receipt of the message, each host adapter (22) waits a respective predetermined period of time proportional to its respective address before sending the requested information to the network controller (50). The proportional delay distributes the responses on the wireline links throughout the interval between successive all call messages to avoid overloading the communication network (36) with too many simultaneous responses. The network controller (50) then provides the collected statistical information to the host data processor (12) on demand or to the TTY control console (52), and relays network control information on demand from the TTY console (52) or the host adapter (32) to the network. [See Doelz, column 13, line 59 to column 14, line 34, and FIGs. 1-3].

Thus, using the language of the instant Application, the Doelz reference teaches that a host computer (50) receives network information on a periodic basis from a plurality of users (22, 32, 34) via a wireline link in response to requests for the network information issued by the host computer (50). The host computer (50) then stores the network information and determines (e.g., by

receiving a request) whether an entity (12, 52), that is distinct from the users (22, 32, 34), desires to receive the stored network information. When an entity desires to receive the stored network information, the host computer (50) provides the stored network information, via a wireline link, to the requesting entity (12, 52).

The Irby, III et al. reference, the second of the three references relied upon by the Examiner, discloses a subscriber inventory network that uses a communication network including a program control station (12), a radio transmitter (14), and a plurality of subscriber stations to provide efficient dissemination and rapid exchange of information between the plurality of subscriber stations. Each subscriber station includes a radio receiver (22) and a display (32) and is linked to the program control station (12) by a private telephone line connection (24). The subscriber stations are arranged into groups based on inventory categories. When a first subscriber station's inventory changes, the first subscriber communicates the change to the program control station (12) via a private telephone line connection (24). Upon receiving the updated inventory information from a first subscriber station, the program control station (12) broadcasts the received inventory information and a group address field via the radio transmitter simultaneously to all subscriber stations. Based on the group address field, only the subscriber stations in the first subscriber station's inventory group demodulate and process the transmitted information. In addition, the program control station (12) intermittently broadcasts general information to all the subscriber stations via the radio transmitter. However, the broadcast of the general information is not in response to any received information. [See Irby, III et al., column 1, line 52 to column 2, line 30].

Thus, using the language of the instant Application, the Irby, III et al. reference teaches that a host computer (12) receives user information from a single user via a wireline link (24). The host computer then determines which group of users are to receive the user information based on the received user information (i.e., inventory category). The host computer (12) transmits the user information and a group address to all users via a wireless communication channel, such that only users in the appropriate group receive the transmitted information. The users in the appropriate group then display the received information.

The Jain reference, the third of the three references relied upon by the Examiner, describes a packet data communication system that includes a plurality of users (10, 15, 20), a plurality of routers (11, 18) and a server (14). The routers (11, 18) and the server (14) are coupled to their respective users via wireline links (12, 16, 19). The routers (11, 18) are also coupled to the server (14) via links (13, 17) that may be either wireline, optical fiber, or point-to-point wireless satellite links. [See Jain, column 3, lines 4-28].

In his final Office Action, the Examiner asserts that the Doelz reference teaches steps (a), (b), and (d) of claims 1, 11 and 21, while the Irby, III et al. reference teaches step (c) of said claims. The Examiner concedes that the Doelz and Irby, III et al. references do not teach "wireless communication channels"; thus, the Examiner relies on the Jain reference to teach the use of wireless communication channels. [See Final Office Action, ¶¶ 39, 40]. The Applicants submit that neither Doelz nor Irby, III et al. nor Jain teach, or otherwise suggest, steps (a) and (d) of Applicants' claims 1, 11 and 21 because none of the references, either individually or in combination, teach or suggest transmission of network information to a host computer by a plurality of users and transmission, by the host computer, of user information to the plurality of users that transmitted the network information, wherein the network information is distinct from the user information.

Although the combination of Doelz, Irby, III et al., and Jain describe a method by which one or more users transmit information to a host and the host then retransmits the received information to other entities (i.e., users or other devices that did not transmit information initially), the combination of references fails to teach or suggest that the information received by the host from the users (i.e., the network information claimed in claims 1, 11, and 21) is distinct from the information transmitted from the host to the users (i.e., the specific user information of claims 1, 11, and 21). Rather, the Applicants maintain that the combination of references teach only that the information received from the user (as in Irby, III et al.) or users (as in Doelz) is of the same type as the information transmitted from the host. That is, the combination of references teaches that the information both received and retransmitted is either network information (i.e., the statistical information of Doelz) or user information (i.e., the inventory updates of Irby, III et al.). The Irby, III et al. reference also teaches the transmission of general information from the host to all the users; however, in

contrast to the present invention, this transmission is not responsive to a previous reception of network information.

By contrast, Applicants' invention, as recited in independent claims 1, 11, and 21, describes a method by which a plurality of users provide network information to the host computer. The host computer then determines, based on the received network information, specific user information and transmits the specific user information to the users that transmitted the network information. Applicants' Specification clearly discloses on page 5, lines 24-33 that the network information is distinct from the user information.

Network information 126 includes configuration information and statistical information. The configuration information contains information regarding the platform of the network, or individual computers, and software applications contained within the network, or individual computers. The platform information indicates the type of hardware contained within the network, or within the individual computer. User information 127-130 includes customer information which may be bug reports, bug fixes, updates of software applications, free software, pricing information, and enhancements of existing software applications.

[Specification, page 5, lines 24-33]. In addition, the Specification further describes the content of statistical and configuration information on page 6, lines 7-15.

Statistical information indicates how many times a particular software application is used, how often the network or computer is used, and any other type of statistical information that may be compiled regarding the use of the network or computer. The configuration information indicates the number of computers in the network, types of computers, types of software applications, revision levels of the software applications, and any other type of platform information or software application information.

[Specification, page 6, lines 7-15]. Thus, whereas the combination of Doelz, Irby, III et al., and Jain disclose a method for simply retransmitting received information, the present invention provides a method for a host computer to transmit one type of information (user information) upon receiving another type of information (network information).

The combination of Doelz, Irby, III et al., and Jain also fails to teach that the users which transmitted information to the host are also the recipients of the information from the host. In the Doelz reference, the network controller (host computer) receives network information from the host adapters (users) and retransmits the network information on demand to the host data processor or the TTY control console (i.e., other entities). Similarly, in the Irby, III et al. reference, the program control station (host computer) receives user information from one subscriber station (user) and retransmits the user information to other subscriber stations (i.e., other entities). By contrast, steps (a) and (d) of Applicants' claims 1, 11 and 21 require a plurality of users (computers or computer network servers) that transmitted network information to a host computer to also receive user information from the host computer. Thus, in contrast to passing received information along to other entities as in the combination of cited references, the present invention provides user information from the host computer to those users that originally provided network information to the host computer, wherein the network information is distinct from the user information.

Therefore, for the above reasons, the Applicants submit that the recitations of claims 1, 11, and 21 are neither taught nor otherwise suggested by the combination of the three references. Accordingly, the Applicants submit that claims 1, 11, and 21 are not obvious in view of the combination of cited references and respectfully request that claims 1, 11, and 21 may be passed to allowance.

Claims 2-3, 6, 12-13, 17, and 24 depend ultimately from claims 1, 11, and 21, which claims have been shown allowable above. In addition, these claims introduce additional subject matter that, particularly when considered in the context of their respective parent claims, constitute patentable subject matter. Claims 2 and 12, for example, introduce the additional patentable subject matter of defining the network information as either configuration information or statistical information, wherein configuration information includes platform information and software information. The host computer further generates marketing reports based on the statistical information in claims 3 and 13. Claims 6 and 17 further introduce the patentable subject matter of receiving a request for specific user information at the host computer to allow the host computer to determine that the users need to receive the specific user information. Finally claim 24 introduces the patentable subject matter of defining the plurality of users

as computers or computer networks. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that claims 2-3, 6, 12-13, 17, and 24 may now be passed to allowance.

3.

Claim 11 was not properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Williams in view of Jain.

Claim 11 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Williams in view of Jain. As noted in Argument Section Two above, claim 11 is an independent claim directed toward a method for collecting network information from and providing user information to a plurality of computers. As recited in claim 11, the Applicants' method begins when each computer transmits network information to the host computer on a periodic basis via at least a first wireless communication channel. Upon receiving the network information, the host computer stores the network information and determines, based on the stored network information, whether the computers need to receive specific user information. Upon determining that the computers need to receive specific user information, the host computer transmits the specific user information to the computers "via a second wireless communication channel." [See Applicant's claim 11, step (d)] (emphasis added).

As discussed in Argument Section One above, and as conceded by the Examiner in paragraph 33 of his final Office Action, the Williams reference fails to teach or suggest the use of wireless communication channels between the host computer and the user computers. Consequently, the Examiner relies on the Jain reference to teach the use of wireless communication channels. [See Final Office Action ¶ 33]. However, the Applicants maintain that Jain teaches the use of point-to-point wireless channels only. That is, Jain's individual point-to-point links effectively replace Williams' individual wireline links. Accordingly, the combination of Williams and Jain is incapable of providing user information to a plurality of computers via a single wireless communication channel, as is recited in claim 11. Thus, in contrast to the recitations of claim 11, multiple point-to-point satellite links would be required to transmit user information to multiple users pursuant to the combination of Williams and Jain. However, with the instant invention, only a single (second) wireless channel is required to transmit the user information to all users (computers).

Therefore, for the above reasons, the Applicants submit that the recitations of claim 11 is neither taught nor otherwise suggested by the combination of the Williams and Jain references. Accordingly, the Applicants submit that claim 11 is not obvious in view of the combination of the cited references and respectfully request that claim 11 may be passed to allowance.

4.

Claims 4 and 14 were not properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Doelz in view of Irby, III et al. and Jain, and further in view of Ellison et al.

Claims 4 and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Doelz in view of Irby, III et al. and Jain, and further in view of Ellison et al. Claims 4 and 14 depend ultimately from claims 1 and 11, which claims have been shown allowable above in Argument Sections Two and Three. In addition, these claims introduce additional subject matter that, particularly when considered in the context of their respective parent claims, constitute patentable subject matter. For example, claims 4 and 14 introduce the additional patentable subject matter of verification of software authorization by the host computer based on the software information contained in the configuration information introduced in claims 2 and 12. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that claims 4 and 14 may now be passed to allowance.

5.

Claims 7 and 18 were properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Doelz in view of Irby, III et al. and Jain, and further in view of Ogaki et al.

Claims 7 and 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Doelz in view of Irby, III et al. and Jain, and further in view of Ogaki et al. Claims 7 and 18 depend ultimately from claims 1 and 11, which claims have been shown allowable above in Argument Sections Two and Three. In addition, these claims introduce additional subject matter that, particularly when considered in the context of their respective parent claims, constitute patentable subject matter. For example, claims 7 and 18 introduce the additional patentable subject matter of defining the specific user information as either bug

reports, bug fixes, updates, free software, or pricing information. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that claims 7 and 18 may now be passed to allowance.

CONCLUSION

For the aforementioned reasons, claims 1-4, 6, 7, 11-14, 17, 18, 21, and 24 are believed to be allowable. Therefore, allowance of claims 1-4, 6, 7, 11-14, 17, 18, 21, and 24 is hereby respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX OF THE APPEALED CLAIMS

1. A method for collecting network information from and providing user information to a plurality of computer networks, wherein each of the plurality of computer networks includes a server and computers, the method comprises the steps of:
 - a) transmitting, by each of the servers of the plurality of computer networks via a communication device over at least a first wireless communication channel, network information to a host computer on a periodic basis;
 - b) upon receiving the network information, storing, by the host computer, the network information to produce stored network information;
 - c) determining, by the host computer, whether the plurality of computer networks need to receive specific user information, wherein determination is based on the stored network information;
 - d) transmitting, by the host computer via a second wireless communication channel, the specific user information, to at least two servers of the plurality of computer networks;
 - e) distributing, by the at least two servers of the plurality of computer networks, a portion of the specific user information to at least one computer; and
 - f) after receiving the specific user information, displaying, by the at least one computer, the specific user information.

2. In the method of claim 1, step (b) further comprises storing the network information as at least one of configuration information or statistical information, wherein configuration information further includes platform information and software information.
3. The method of claim 2 further comprises generating, by the host computer, user marketing reports based on the statistical information.
4. The method of claim 2 further comprises verifying, by the host computer, software authorization based on the software information.
6. In the method of claim 1, step (c) further comprises receiving a request for the specific user information.
7. In the method of claim 1, step (f) further comprises displaying the specific user information, wherein the specific user information includes at least one of bug reports, bug fixes, updates, free software, and pricing information.

11. A method for collecting network information from and providing user information to a plurality of computers, the method comprises the steps of:
- a) transmitting, by each of the plurality of computers via a communication device over at least a first wireless communication channel, network information to a host computer on a periodic basis;
 - b) upon receiving the network information, storing, by the host computer, the network information to produce stored network information;
 - c) determining, by the host computer, whether the plurality of computers need to receive specific user information, wherein determination is based on the stored network information;
 - d) transmitting, by the host computer via a second wireless communication channel, the specific user information to the plurality of computers; and
 - e) after receiving the specific user information, displaying by at least one of the plurality of computers, the specific user information.
12. In the method of claim 11, step (a) further comprises transmitting the network information as at least one of configuration information or statistical information, wherein configuration information further comprises platform information and software information.
13. The method of claim 12, further comprises generating, by the host computer, user marketing reports based on the statistical information.
14. The method of claim 12 further comprises verifying, by the host computer, software authorization based on the software information.

17. In the method of claim 11, step (c) further comprises receiving a request for specific user information.

18. In the method of claim 11, step (e) further comprises displaying the specific user information, wherein the specific user information includes at least one of bug reports, bug fixes, updates, free software, and pricing information.

21. A method for a host computer to collect network information from and provide user information to a plurality of users, the method comprises the steps of:

- a) receiving network information from the plurality of users on a periodic basis via at least a first wireless communication channel;
- b) upon receiving the network information, storing the network information to produce stored network information;
- c) determining whether the plurality of users need to receive specific user information, wherein determination is based on the stored network information; and
- d) transmitting the specific user information to the plurality of users via a second wireless communication channel.

24. In the method of claim 21, step (a) further comprises receiving the network information from the plurality of users, wherein the plurality of users includes at least a plurality of computers or a plurality of computer networks.